



PERMITTING & DEVELOPMENT
BUILDING
DIVISION
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Work Exempt From a Building Permit

- The listed exemptions do not apply to any property designated as an ECDC 19.10 Earth Subsidence and Landslide Hazard Area or ECDC Title 23 Critical Area.
- Building Permit Exemptions do not constitute exemption from Land Use, Zoning, Design Board Review or other Planning or Engineering approvals.
- Please refer to the many informational handouts available on the City's website.
- If there is any question whether or not the work you are considering requires a permit, please contact the Development Services Department at (425) 771-0220.

Permits shall not be required for the following unless required by the provisions of ECDC Title 23 or limited or prohibited by the provisions of Chapter 19.10 ECDC:

1) BUILDING – COMMERCIAL & RESIDENTIAL:

(See additional exemptions for residential work, section #4)

- (a) One (1) story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses; provided the floor area (including the exterior wall or post) does not exceed 120 square feet, with a maximum eave of thirty (30) inches.
- (b) Fences not over six (6) feet high; provided a permit is not required by Chapter 17.30 ECDC.
- (c) Movable cases, counters and partitions not over five (5) feet nine (9) inches high.
- (d) Retaining walls 4 feet (1,219 mm) in height or less measured vertically from the finished grade at the exposed toe of the retaining wall to the highest point in the wall, unless:
 - Supporting a surcharge; or
 - Impounding Class I, II, III-A liquids; or
 - Subject to the provisions of Chapter 23.50 ECDC or Chapter 23.80 ECDC.
- (e) Rockeries. Construction of rockeries is limited as specified elsewhere in this code.
- (f) Water tanks supported directly upon grade if the capacity does not exceed 5000 gallons and the ratio of height to diameter or width does not exceed two (2) to one (1).
- (g) Sidewalks and driveways not more than 30 inches above adjacent grade, and not over any basement or story below and are not part of an accessible route, provided a permit is not required by Chapter 18.60 ECDC.
- (h) Painting, papering, tiling, carpeting, cabinets, countertops and similar finish work.
- (i) Temporary motion picture, television and theater stage sets and scenery.
- (j) Shade cloth structures constructed for nursery or agricultural purposes.
- (k) Prefabricated swimming pools accessory to an occupancy in which the pool walls are entirely above the adjacent grade and the capacity does not exceed 5,000 gallons. Hot tubs and spas less than 5,000 gallons, completely supported by the ground.
- (l) Grading less than fifty (50) cubic yards (placed, removed or moved within any 365-day period) unless subject to the provisions of Chapter 23.50 ECDC or Chapter 23.80 ECDC.
- (m) Repair of appliances which do not alter original approval, certification, listing or code.
- (n) Replacement or adding new insulation with no drywall removal or placement.
- (o) Replacement or repair of existing gutters or downspouts.
- (p) The following types of signs are exempt from permit requirements except that dimensional size and placement standards shall comply with Chapter 20.60 ECDC:
 - Replacing the panel on a previously permitted existing wall cabinet or pole sign,
 - Repainting an existing previously permitted wood sign,
 - Painted or vinyl lettering on storefront windows,
 - Governmental signs, campaign signs, official public notices, and signs required by provision of local, state, or federal law.

- Temporary signs announcing the sale or rent of property and other temporary signs as described in ECDC 20.60.080.
- Signs erected by the transportation authorities, and temporary seasonal and holiday displays.

2) MECHANICAL:

- (a) Portable heating, ventilation, cooling, cooking or clothes drying appliances.
- (b) Replacement of any part that does not alter approval of equipment or make such equipment unsafe.
- (c) Portable fuel cell appliances that are not connected to a fixed piping system and are not interconnected to a power grid.
- (d) Steam, hot or chilled water piping within any heating or cooling equipment regulated by this code.
- (e) Portable evaporative cooler.
- (f) Self-contained refrigeration systems containing ten (10) pounds or less of refrigerant or that are actuated by motor of one (1) horsepower or less.

3) PLUMBING:

- (a) The stopping of leaks in drains, water, soil, waste or vent pipe, provided that the replacement of defective material shall be done with new material and a permit obtained and inspection made.
- (b) Reinstallation or replacement of approved prefabricated plumbing fixtures that do not involve or require the replacement or rearrangement of valves or pipes.

4) RESIDENTIAL PERMIT EXEMPTIONS:

In addition the following exemptions apply for single family dwellings:

- (a) One (1) story detached accessory structures used as tool and storage sheds, playhouses and similar uses; provided the floor area (including the exterior wall or post) does not exceed 200 square feet, with a maximum eave of twelve (12) inches and maximum height of fifteen (15) feet. Vehicle storage structures, such as garages and carports, are not exempted.

- (b) Window awnings supported by an exterior wall and do not project more than fifty-four (54) inches from the exterior wall and do not require additional support. ECDC Title 23 provisions shall not apply to such awnings.
- (c) Sport courts less than 2,000 square feet.
- (d) Dock repair of individual decking members. ECDC Title 23 provisions shall not apply.
- (e) Replacement or repair of existing exterior siding. ECDC Title 23 provisions shall not apply.
- (f) Replacement or repair of existing window or doors provided; no alteration of structural members is required, the replacement would not require installation of safety glazing, the installation does not affect egress requirements. ECDC Title 23 provisions shall not apply.
- (g) Minor like-for-like drywall repairs not involving fire-rated assemblies.
- (h) Replacement or repair of individual decking, joists, stair treads, or intermediate rails. ECDC Title 23 provisions do not apply.
- (i) Uncovered platforms, decks, patios, not exceeding 200 square feet in area, that are not more than thirty (30) inches above grade at any point and do not serve the exit door required by IRC Section R311.4
- (j) Canopies, as defined in ECDC 17.70.035, accessory to a single family dwelling, with a floor area measured to the exterior wall or post not to exceed 200 square feet, for covered storage, carport or similar use.
- (k) Reroof overlays. Overlays are not permitted over slate, clay or cement tiles, or where the existing roof has two or more applications of any type of roofing.